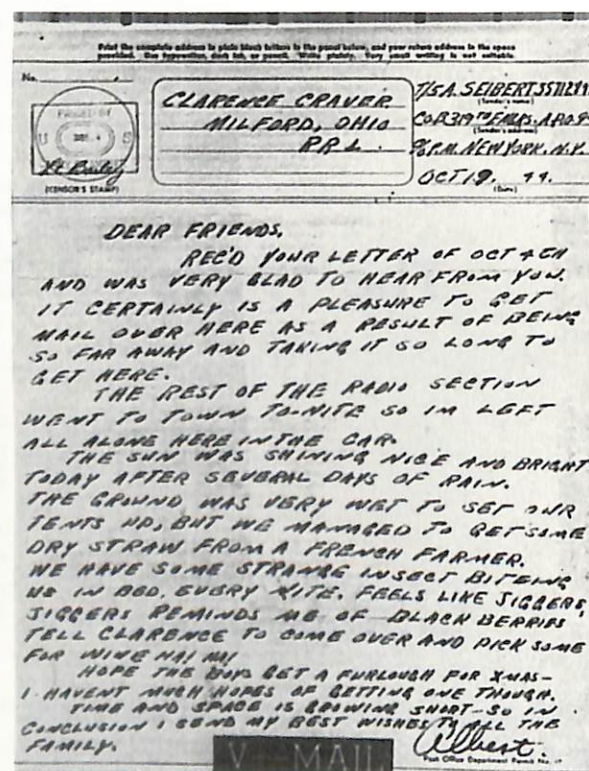
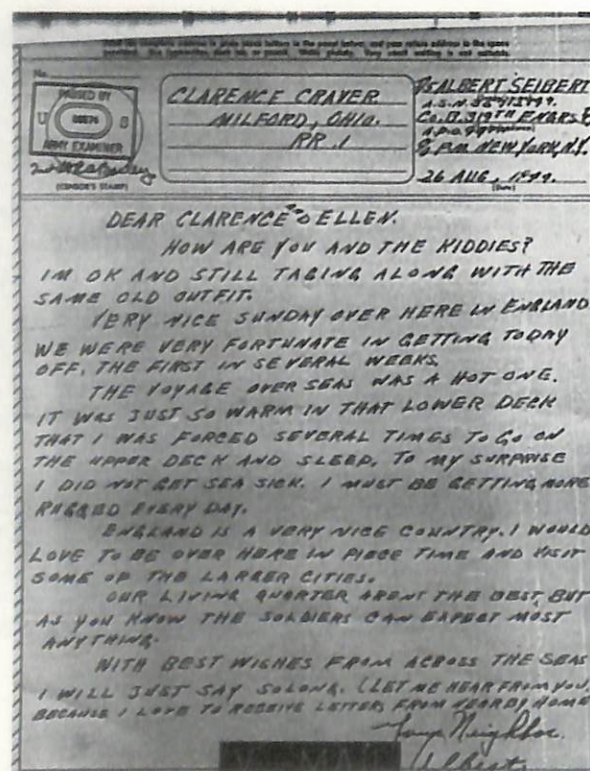




"V-Mail" letters from a G.I. parishioner to friends back in Stonelick Township.

microfilmed - a very advanced technology in the 40's - after being reviewed by censors to assure that no military information was being betrayed.

Stateside, the micro-negatives were enlarged, and the "print" sent on to its destination. On the sample letters, the censor's approval and the photographic character of the paper are readily observed.

Civilians of St. Philomena, too, contributed to the "war effort." Most important of all civilian workers were farmers. As Napoleon had long ago discovered, every army "marches on its stomach." But Cincinnati, within commuting distance, was a manufacturing center, and a crucial one. At that time, Cincinnati was the "Machine Tool Capital of the World;" and machine tools were - and are - the basis of all manufacturing.

In addition, the Wright Aeronautical Corporation built radial aircraft engines at its huge complex in Lockland. These engines powered some of the most important aircraft in the Allied effort. The need for industrial manpower led many a rural person from field to factory, never to return. So it was in Stonelick Valley.

The end of World War II began a new era in Clermont County, and in St. Philomena parish. The need for military equipment ended with the surrender of Japan. But the demand for consumer goods, after the years of shortages and rationing, was enormous. The Cincinnati area had a very substantial industrial complex in place, quickly converted to peace-time production. Jobs were plentiful. Returning servicemen were starting or increasing families. Housing was scarce. Land was plentiful and inexpensive in Clermont County. And so, the County began a significant transition from an agricultural community to a "bedroom" community, as tens of thousands of commuting industrial workers moved across the Little Miami to the burgeoning subdivisions and mobile home parks in Clermont County.

Still, Stonelick Valley was just a little too far from the city. To be sure, population in the township expanded rapidly, but nothing like the explosions that occurred elsewhere in the County. St. Philomena parish was, once again, in a growth cycle. New names appeared on parish rolls, as housing construction occurred at a steady pace throughout the late 40's, 50's and the 60's.

The turbulent decade of the 1940's was ushered out by Father Coleman, who replaced Father McGurn in 1947. Father McGurn is fondly remembered. As his servers changed clothes after Mass, they would commonly find some extra pocket money, slipped there by the pastor.

There being no parochial school, Catechism classes were held in the summer. Father McGurn would "circle the hills" in his well-worn car, automobiles being very scarce at the time due to the conversion of Detroit factories to military production, picking up his students. When he at last rolled into the church yard, the interior, the trunk and even the fenders were filled with children.

The summer ended with Father McGurn hosting an outing at Coney Island for his faithful altar boys. These are the elements of the strong sense of community which has always been a part of parish life at St. Philomena.